

Louisiana Girl Scouts promote the Forever Green Initiative

Girl Scouts Louisiana East was recently selected for participation in a national community action project known as the Forever Green Initiative. Based in the Greater Baton Rouge area, the project is geared toward helping young girls develop and use their leadership skills to impact the environment in a positive way.

As the organization prepares for the 100th anniversary of Girl Scouting in 2012, the council has implemented the Forever Green Initiative as a way to call upon local scouts to present an earth-friendly project to be conducted over the next three years.

"The goal of the project is for scouts to promote environmental stewardship through their schools and communities in order to improve air quality, promote energy and water use, waste management and using green space," said Allison Pastor, Vice President of Properties, Girl Scouts Louisiana East. "The idea is to get scouts to think about green living and ideas which will make a sustainable impact on their school, home or community."

The Forever Green Initiative begins with a monthly challenge, which outlines various ways in which local scouts can strive to be more environmentally aware. A few proposed ideas for projects include starting a "no idling" program at your school, planting trees and vegetable gardens, collecting Mardi Gras beads for recycling and redistribution, launching a walk to school program (by counting the number of miles you may walk instead of traveling by car) and starting a school recycling program. Additional ideas include promoting paper

recycling, finding ways to eliminate plastic and Styrofoam, and only using washable dishes during lunch.

Earlier this year, the Forever Green Initiative kicked off with several projects, as area scouts planted over 4,200 trees at Camp Covington last Arbor Day, and participated in a successful clean-up day at City Park in New Orleans over Earth Day weekend. At the Earth Day event, several troops presented their Forever Green project ideas on poster board for other troops and volunteers to glean ideas for projects of their own.

Projects are submitted to the local council for initial approval. Approved projects are then forwarded to Girl Scout National Headquarters, and a final report listing the projects will be presented at the 100th anniversary celebration in 2012.

Girl Scouts Louisiana East is a recently realigned council formed from the combination of the Audubon Council with the Southeast Louisiana Council in April 2008. Covering 23 parishes in southeastern Louisiana, the council currently serves approximately 15,000 girls and 6,400 adult volunteers.

For more information, contact GSLE on the Web at www.gsle.org/aboutus/about.asp, or visit the GSLE Regional Service Center at 545 Colonial Drive, Baton Rouge; or their Corporate Headquarters at 841 S. Clearview Parkway in New Orleans.



Girl Scouts prepare soil for planting at Girl Scout Camp Covington



Girl Scouts prep an area for tree planting at Girl Scout Camp Covington